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ABSTRACT

Chinese students have particular problems with the intersection of two English verb classes: transitional event verbs and state verbs of having and being. The problem is that these two verb classes appear to "pair up." Chinese students tend to be unaware that these two classes pair up. This study investigated whether lexical aspect could be taught. Participants were 115 Chinese university students in a freshman English course. Half of the students received 4 hours of explicit instruction and corrective feedback on the use of verb pairs over 2 months, while a control group of students did not receive this instruction and feedback. Teaching materials focused on the event/state pairs and the general notion of lexical aspect. Pictures were used to depict transitional event and state meanings and to give students a feeling for how the pairs interacted when placed along a time continuum. Results from periodic testing of both groups of students indicated that unlike the control group, the experimental group showed significant improvement on tests covering the use of event/state verbal pairs. (Contains 14 references.) (SM)

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A Study on the Semantic Distinctions of English Verbs and Its Implications for Instruction

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Abstract

Leech (1987) classified verbs as falling into eight classes of meaning: Momentary Verbs, Transitional Event Verbs, Activity Verbs, Process Verbs, Verbs of Inert Perception, Verbs of Inert Cognition, State Verbs of Having and Being, Verbs of Bodily Sensation. In the literature it seems to have gone unnoticed that Chinese students have particular problems with the intersection of two of these verb classes- 'Transitional Event Verbs' and 'State Verbs of Having and Being'. The problem can be defined as follows. 'Transitional Event Verbs' and 'State Verbs of Having and Being' seem to "pair up". When this happens, aspect is denoted lexically. Chinese students are generally unaware that one, these two classes pair up and that two, when this happens, aspect is denoted lexically. There are primarily two reasons for this problem. First, Chinese students are generally unprepared to encounter the phenomenon of lexical aspect (aspect is denoted with grammatical particles in Chinese). Second, teachers don't teach this subject area. We however, believe that lexical aspect can and should be taught. To test whether lexical aspect can be taught we put together a study of 115 Soochow University students studying in a Freshman English course. Half of the students, the experimental group, were given 4 hours of explicit instruction and corrective feedback on the use of verb pairs over a two month period while the other half, the control group, were not. The finding of this study indicates that unlike the control group, the experimental group showed significant improvement on tests covering the use of event/state verbal pairs. The article concludes with a suggested teaching model, which aims to help students distinguish the lexical aspect of event/state verbal pairs in English.

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key words: Transitional Event Verb, State Verbs of Having and Being, action and condition, lexical item, lexical aspect, event/state verbal pairs

INTRODUCTION

A discussion of lexical aspect should begin with a discussion of the unique, almost individual nature of verbs. From a grammatical perspective, verbs appear, at first glance, to form a single broad homogenous class (they all appear in certain slots and take on certain forms). From a semantic perspective however verbs can be reformulated into a number of different and distinct classes. Recent attempts at categorizing verbs into semantic classes (Levin, 1993) have yielded in excess of 50 different categories. One of the earliest and most successful attempts at putting verbs into semantic classes can be traced to Vendler (1967). His four classes of activity verbs, accomplishment verbs, achievement verbs and state verbs set the stage for all later and more complex attempts at the semantic categorization of verbs.

One way to best appreciate the individual semantic properties of verbs is to draw an analogy with nouns. Nouns can be semantically grouped into at least two sub-classes; count and non-count nouns. In a similar way verbs can be arranged into different semantic groups. All the verbs in a single group, not surprisingly, behave in quite similar ways with respect to how they interact with other elements in a sentence (indirect objects, direct objects, agent, aspectual particles, etc.).

For this study writers have assembled over 80 verb pairs[1] into one semantic grouping. We call these pairs event/state pairs and they can be characterized as follows:

1. The pairs are made up of one 'Transitional Event verb' and one 'State Verb of Having and Being' (using Leech's classification).

[1] The list of verbal pairs can be seen in Appendix 1.

2. The 'Transitional Event verb' and the 'State Verb of Having and Being' pair are linked in a native speaker's "mind".

When an untrained Chinese EFL student attempts to form a sentence that denotes aspect with verbs that make up these pairs the student will often make a mistake. Below we show two examples of typical mistakes. A typical teacher might attempt to solve these problems with a grammatical explanation. The writers believe that problems of this nature need to be corrected with an explanation that is more semantic in nature.

Typical mistake: * "How long has he returned?"

Typical grammatical correction: Change the sentence to "when did he return?"

Suggested semantic correction: Returned cannot be used here. It expresses a transitional event. We need to choose a word or phrase that may be used to cover an extended period of time. Our goal here should be to express a state. The word or phrase that best expresses this state is probably "to be back".

Typical mistake: * "The baby has woke up for 5 minutes."

Typical grammatical correction: Change the sentence to "five minutes ago".

Suggested semantic correction: "Woke up" is a transitional event verb. It cannot be used to describe a period of time which is characterized by no change taking place. The stative half of this pair is "to be awake". We can use "to be awake" to describe a situation that remains the same (unchanged) over a period of time.

This paper first describes the semantic distinctions between different verb types in English. Next, to test whether lexical aspect can be taught we put together a study in which a total of 115 students from two Freshman English classes participate. Half of the students, the experimental group, were given 4 hours of explicit instruction and corrective feedback on the use of verb pairs

over a two month period while the other half, the control group, were not. The study finds that the experimental group showed significant improvement on tests covering the use of event/state verbal pairs. The paper concludes with a suggested teaching model, which aims at arousing students' awareness of the inherent meanings of the event/state verbal pairs in English.

DISCUSSION OF HOW VERB CLASSES HAVE BEEN CATEGORIZED

Vendler's groups

Vendler (1967) categorized verbs into four groups: activities, accomplishments, achievements, and state. Li (1990) describes these four groups in the following manner;

> "activity verbs encode situations as consisting of phases following one another in time with no inherent terminal point, for instance, run, walk, and swim. Accomplishment verbs also indicate situations consisting of phases succeeding one another in time, but they contrast with activities in that they encode an inherent terminal point as well, for example, paint a picture, write a letter and build a house. Achievements encode situations as instantaneous, i.e., as having no time duration; in this they contrast with activity and accomplishment verbs, which do imply time duration. Verb phrases like lose/find something, reach the summit, and cross the border are all of this type. Stative verbs like know and love encode situations as involving indefinite duration and no inherent endpoint, but unlike activity and accomplishment verbs they denote situations as homogeneous with no successive phases."

We have condensed Li's explanation in the chart below:

Activity	Accomplishment	Achievement	State

Verbs	Verbs	Verbs	Verbs
Create situations with no end points. Internally the situation is marked by repeated change.	Create situations with an end point. This end point is created by the noun that follows the verb.	Create situations that begin and end in essentially the same instant of time.	Create situations with no end points. Internally the situation is marked by no change.

Comrie's pairs of contrasts

Comrie (1976) later proposes another approach to categorizing verbs. He feels verbs should be categorized as pairs of contrasts, such as process vs. stative, telic vs. atelic, and punctual vs. durative. Process verbs encode situations as consisting of successive phrases while stative verbs encode situations as static and unchanging. The distinctions between punctual and durative verbs are durative verbs encode situations as having time duration while punctual verbs don't and durative verbs can be modified by durational adverbials while punctual verbs can't. Finally, the distinction between telic and atelic verbs is that telic verbs encode the endpoint or end result of a durative situation, whereas atelic verbs depict durative situations without endpoint or end result. In comparing Vendler's and Comrie's system Li concludes "process verbs correspond to activities, telic verbs to accomplishments, punctual verbs to achievements, and stative verbs to states."

Leech's classes of verbal meaning

While discussing the effect of the Progressive Aspect, Leech (1987) classifies the English verb into eight classes of verbal meaning.

- 'Momentary Verbs' such as *hit, jump, kick, knock, nod, tap, wink,* etc. refer to happenings so momentary that it is difficult to think of them as having duration.
- 'Transitional Event Verbs' such as *arrive, die, fall, land, lose, stop, leave,* etc. denote transition into a state.

- 'Activity Verbs' such as *drink, eat, play, rain, work, write,* etc. refer to a continuing, though bounded activity.
- 'Process Verbs' such as *grow, widen, change, mature, slow down, deteriorate*, etc. have duration, but not indefinite duration.
- 'Verbs of Inert Perception' such as *see, hear, feel, smell, taste,* etc. denote the perceiver is merely passively receptive whereas in the case of *look at* and *listen to* the perceiver is actively directing his attention towards some object.
- 'Verbs of Inert Cognition' such as *believe, forget, hope, imagine, know, suppose, understand,* etc. refer to a mental state, and are also passive in meaning.
- 'State Verbs of Having and Being' such as the key verbs *be* and *have*, *belong to, own, contain, consist of, matter, resemble,* etc. include, as part of their meaning, the notion of 'being' or 'having'. Often a paraphrase with *be* or *have* is possible: *matter=be important; resemble=be like; own=have in one's possession*; etc.
- 'Verbs of Bodily Sensation' such as *ache, hurt, itch, tingle,* etc. denote internal sensation. (pp.23-27).

Leech's classification, particularly his semantic distinction of the 'Transitional Event Verb' and 'State Verbs of Having and Being' is useful in classifying the verbs that fall into our pairs. According to Leech, 'Transitional Event Verbs' denote an immediately completed event that results in a visible change of state. For example, in the case of *He died*, after the action "die" is fulfilled, the subject automatically proceeds to the state of "being dead". To denote the event, the sentences *He died several days ago* or *He has died recently* are both correct, but the shift from Past Tense to Present Perfective Tense establishes different time frames. To describe the state, we can only use Leech's 'State Verbs of Having and Being': "be dead". The sentence **He has*

died for several days is not acceptable, because for several days is a time phrase which indicates duration, meaning the action "die" being repeated during this period of time for several days. To express this meaning, the 'State Verb of Having and Being' should be employed in *He has been dead for several days* or *It has been several days since he died.* An analysis of the above sentences will shed light on the correct use of the event and state verbal pairs.

PROBLEM EXPERIENCED BY CHINESE LEARNERS OF ENGLISH

When we classify verbs as state or event, we must do so in reference to a particular language. While this event/state dichotomy is clear in the 'Transitional Event Verbs' and 'State Verbs of Having and Being' in English, speakers of different languages may differ in their decision as to whether the verb for a particular situation is stative or not. We suggest that in Chinese the 'Transitional Event Verb' and 'State Verb of Having and Being' are often encoded in one lexical item.

The difference in the two languages can be clearly illustrated by the following examples.[2] Please note that the PAM, perfective aspect marker, is often used at the end of the sentence in Chinese.

Event	My car broke down yesterday. 我的車子昨天拋錨了				
	uo-de	tse-z	zuo-tian	pao-mao	le
	My	car	yesterday	broke down	(PAM)
State	My car is broken. 我的車子拋錨了				
	uo-de	tse-z	pao-mao	le	
	My	car	is broken	(PAM)	

[2] More examples can be seen in Appendix 2.

Event	He became bald last year.他頭去年禿了					
	ta	tou	qu-nian	tu		le
	He	head	last year	became bald		(PAM)
State	He has been bald for a long time. 他頭禿了好久了					
	ta	tou	tu		le	hao-jiou le
	He	head	became bald	(PAM)	a long time	(PAM)
Event	Mr. Lee died last week.李先生上禮拜過世了					
	Lee	xian-sheng	shang-li-bai	guo-sh		le
	Lee	Mr.	last week	died		(PAM)
State	Mr. Lee has been dead for several years. 李先生過世好幾年了					
	Lee	xian-sheng	guo-sh	hao-ji-nian		le
	Lee	Mr.	died	several years		(PAM)

In the above examples, the same lexical item pao-mao le, tu le, guo-sh are used to denote both a state (is broken, is bald, is dead) and an event (broke down, became bald, died). The writers believe that many Chinese learners tend to "mismap" Chinese words into English words because they assume that what is true for Chinese is also true for English. An ignorance of the event/state dichotomy in English on the part of the Chinese students can explain certain mistakes students make in English. It has been noted that even advanced learners tend to use the 'Transitional Event Verb' where the 'State Verb of Having and Being' is required. Such mistaken sentences as *He has got up since 5:00, They have got married for a week, She has come to Taiwan for a long time, and Mr. Lee has graduated from school for two years* are readily seen in the writings of English majors at Soochow University.

Further, the writer conducted a small study in 1998 and found that Chinese learners in an ESL setting also fail to acquire an understanding of the state and event distinction. In the study, a group of 8 fifteen-year-olds, who had all been in New Zealand for more than four years, were given five mistaken sentences such as *They've got married for two years.* The students were told to identify the mistakes and correct them. The results show that four of them failed to find any mistakes, two students found the mistakes in two sentences and corrected them, one student

corrected three and one student corrected four. On an average, one student got 1.37 out of 5 answers right. This shows that the distinction between state and event might not be acquired through extensive exposure to the target language only. The intervention of direct instruction may be needed to help learners break down fossilized forms and create more accurate models of the target language.

THE STUDY

Schmidt (1992) points out that learners must be aware of the difference between their own grammars and the target grammar and further argues that learners may not notice any positive evidence of differences in natural input. This means that although some features of language may be acquired through extensive exposure to the language, other features may require instruction and corrective feedback to be eliminated from the learner's interlanguage. The high misuse frequency of the event/state verbal pairs among Chinese learners has motivated the writers to conduct a study to see whether explicit instruction can change a student's ability to use these pairs correctly. We hypothesize that focused instruction can facilitate acquisition by increasing the learner's awareness. Two steps are taken to teach the learner the 'Transitional Event Verb' and 'State Verb of Having and Being' in English. First, we show learners how Chinese and English differ in encoding transitional events and states. Second, as Bardovi-Harlig and Reynolds (1995) suggest, "the goal of the presentation of positive evidence is to give learners examples of how the target language works." (p. 122), we provide students with examples of the 'Transitional Event Verb' and the 'State Verb of Having and Being' in English and show how they are used respectively to denote an event and a state situation.

Subjects

We started with 115 subjects in our experiment. These students were in two different sections of Freshman English class. Section A, the experimental group, comprises students from the Chinese, Social Work, Sociology, History, Philosophy, Political Science, Music, Japanese, German, Math, Chemistry, and Microbiology departments. Section B, the control group, comprises students from the Japanese, German, Physics, Microbiology, and Psychology departments. The following table shows the students final grades during the fall semester of 1999 in the two English classes. These scores suggest that these two classes were evenly matched in terms of general English ability.

Final Grade for the Fall Semester, 1999

	Below 60	60-69	70-79	80-89	Over 90
Section A (55 students)	7	22	18	7	1
Section B (60 students)	9	19	24	7	1

Teaching Materials

The experimental group received teaching materials which had been developed by the writers. These materials focused on the event/state pairs as well as the general notion of lexical aspect. We use pictures extensively in our teaching materials to depict transitional event and state meanings and also to give students a feeling for how the pairs interact when placed alongside a time continuum (moving from past to present).

Pictures in exercise one, for example, show:

Picture 1- a boy jumped into the pool at 12:30.

Picture 2- the boy was swimming in the pool at 12:35.

Picture 3- the boy got out of the pool at 12:40.

Picture 4- the boy is outside of the pool (now it is 12:45)

We then asked the following questions of the students to elicit event and state meanings and the proper tense and aspect.

1. What did the boy do at 12:30?
2. At 12:35 where was the boy?
3. How long was the boy in the pool?
4. What happened at 12:40?
5. Where is the boy now (at 12:45)?
6. How long has the boy been out of the pool?

Procedure

On October 11, 1999, Test 1[3] was administered to both sections of students. The purpose of giving this test was to measure the learners' base knowledge of the target feature. In the test there are 14 multiple-choice questions, which deal with the use of event/state verbal pairs. Students marked their answers on computer cards. After the test, the teacher did not discuss test questions because the same test was to be used again two months later.

On October 21, students of both sections were given a 30-minute introduction to the action/condition dichotomy in English. We discussed differences in use in Chinese and English between 'Transitional Event Verb' and 'State Verb of Having and Being'.[4]

During the period from October 28 to December 16, students in the experimental group were given 4 hours of instruction and practice on the target feature[5] (approximately 30 minutes each time). The teacher also offered corrective feedback to the students in the experimental group. Students in the control group received no instruction whatsoever.

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[3] Test 1 can be seen in Appendix 3.
[4] Detailed instruction on the first day can be seen in Appendix 5.
[5] Details of the instruction to the experimental group can be seen in Appendix 6.

On December 23, a second test was administered to both sections of students. Test 1 was used again. The purpose of giving this test was to measure whether and to what degree the learners changed in their knowledge of the target feature. Unfortunately, as some of the departments scheduled on December 23 as their sports day, quite a few students were absent and therefore could not take the test. As a result, the number of valid data in the first and second test diminished to 42 for the experimental group and 44 for the control group.

On February 21 two months after the second test a third and final test was administered to both groups. Test 2[6] was used to measure the differences in the learners' knowledge and use of the target features. Between the second and third tests we lost a number of test subjects. As a result, the valid data in the third test is 28 for the experimental group and 36 for the control group.

Data analysis

The quantitative analysis of this study involved two statistical procedures using the SPSS/PC+ 8.0 program. T test for paired samples was used to compare the differences in a group's performances in two different tests; for example, the experimental group's performances in the first and second test. T test for independent samples was used to compare the two groups' performances in the same test; for example, the experimental group's and control group's performances in the first test. As the control group did not receive instruction, these statistical procedures were mainly used to examine and discern the differences in the two groups' performances in the three tests across the variable-whether they received instruction or not.

Compare the performances of the two groups in the first test with T test for independent samples

[6] Test 2 can be seen in Appendix 4

	Number	Mean	Standard deviation	SE of Mean
Section A	42	**4.5476**	1.7834	.2752
Section B	44	**5.4318**	2.5280	.3811

Levene's test for equality of variance		T test for equality of mean					
F test	Sig	t	df	2-tail sig	SE of diff	SD of diff	95% CI for Diff lower upper
4.235	.043	-1.866	84	.066	-.8842	.4378	-1.8264 .800E-02
		-1.881	77,448	**.064**	-.8842	.4701	-1.8201 .175E-02

The above table shows that the average scores are 4.5476 for the experimental group and 5.4318 for the control group. As the P-value (2-tail sig) is 0.064>0.05, there is no evidence to indicate that there is a significant difference in the performances of the two groups in the first test. Based on this test we have assumed that these two groups were equivalent.

Performances of the experimental group in the three tests

A. Compare the experimental group's first and second test with T test for paired samples

Paired sample statistics

	Mean	Number	Standard deviation	SE of Mean
Pair 1 First test score	**4.5476**	42	1.7834	.2752
Second test score	**7.0000**	42	2.8882	.4457

Paired sample correlation

	Number	Correlation	Significance
Pair 1 First test score and Second test score	42	.530	.000

Paired sample test

Paired differences						
Mean	Standard deviation	SE of Mean	95% CI for Diff lower upper	t	df	2-tail sig
-2.4524	2.4614	.3798	-3.2194 -1.6853	-6.457	41	**.000**

Note: P≒.000÷ 2≒.000<0.05

The table above shows the average score of the experimental group is 4.5476 in the first test and 7.0000 in the second test. As the P-value is 0.000<0.05, there is clear evidence to show that the experimental group did significantly better in the second test than they did in the first test. In other words, they made significant improvement with the help of instruction.

B. Compare the experimental group's second and third test with T test for paired sampl

Paired sample statistics

	Mean	Number	Standard deviation	SE of Mean
Pair 1 Second test score	**7.2500**	28	2.9643	.5602
Third test score	**9.7500**	28	2.3194	.4383

Paired sample correlation

	Number	Correlation	Significance
Pair 1 Second test score and Third test score	28	.069	.728

Paired sample test

Paired differences						
Mean	Standard deviation	SE of Mean	95% CI for Diff lower upper	t	df	2-tail sig
-2.5000	3.6362	.6872	-3.9100 -1.0900	-3.638	27	**.001**

Note: P≒.001÷ 2≒.0005<0.05

The table above shows that the average score for the experimental group is 7.2500 in the second test and 9.7500 in the third test. As the P-Value is 0.0005<0.05, there is clear evidence to show that the experimental group did significantly better in the third test than they did in the second test.

Performances of the control group in the three tests

A. Compare the control group's first and second test with T test for paired samples

Paired sample statistics

	Mean	Number	Standard deviation	SE of Mean
Pair 1 First test score	**5.4318**	44	2.5280	.3811
Second test score	**6.4545**	44	2.1290	.3210

Paired sample correlation

	number	correlation	significance
Pair 1 First test score and Second test score	44	.451	.002

Paired sample test

Paired differences						
Mean	Standard deviation	SE of Mean	95% CI for Diff lower upper	t	df	2-tail sig
-1.0227	2.4636	.3714	-1.7717 -.2737	-2.754	43	**.009**

Note: P≒.009÷ 2≒.0045<0.05

The table above shows that the average score for the control group is 5.4318 in the first test and 6.4545 in the second test. As the P-Value is 0.0045<0.05, there is evidence to show that the control group did better in the second test than they did in the first test.

B. Compare the control group's second and third test with T test for paired samples

Paired sample statistics

	Mean	Number	Standard deviation	SE of Mean
Pair 1 Second test score	**6.5833**	36	2.2599	.3766
Third test score	**5.6667**	36	2.6939	.4490

Paired sample correlation

	number	correlation	significance
Pair 1 Second test score and Third test score	36	.652	.000

Paired sample test

Paired differences							
Mean	Standard deviation	SE of Mean	95% CI for Diff lower upper		t	df	2-tail sig
.9167	2.1027	.3505	.2052	1.6281	2.616	35	**.013**

Note: P≒.013÷ 2≒.0065<0.05

The table above shows that the average score for the control group is 6.5833 in the second test and 5.6667 in the third test. As the P-Value is 0.0065<0.05, there is evidence to show that the control group did worse in the third test than they did in the second test.

Compare the performances of the two groups in the third test with T test for independent samples

	Number	Mean	Standard deviation	SE of Mean
Section A	36	**9.6389**	2.2823	.3804
Section B	52	**5.7500**	2.7573	.3824

Levene's test for equality of variance		T test for equality of mean					
F test	Sig	t	df	2-tail sig	SE of diff	SD of diff	95% CI for Diff lower upper
1.311	.255	-6.967	86	.000	-3.8889	.5582	-4.9986 -2.7792
		-7.210	83.183	**.000**	-3.8889	.5393	-4.9616 -2.8162

The above table shows that the average scores in the third test are 9.6389 for the experimental group and 5.7500 for the control group. As the P-value (2-tail sig) is 0.000<0.05, there is strong evidence to show that there is a significant difference in the performances of the two groups in the third test. We believe these differences are due to instruction.

Discussion

The study shows that the means of the experimental group went from 4.5476 in the first test, to 7.0000 (7.2500 when the number of valid data is reduced to 28) in the second test, and finally to 9.7500 in the third test. In contrast, the means of the control group went from 5.4318 in the first test, to 6.4545 (6.5833 when the number of valid data is reduced to 36) in the second test, and finally to 5.6667 in the third test. The results of the second test indicate that both groups benefited from the brief introduction to the concept of the event/state dichotomy. However, the experimental group, which received instruction and corrective feedback, did significantly better than the control group, which received no instruction. This confirms our hypothesis that the intervention of instruction can facilitate acquisition by increasing the learner's awareness. The results of the third test show that two months after the instruction, the experimental group was still making progress in the target features while the control group regressed in their use of the target structures. This has led us to believe that once students are made aware of this event/state dichotomy and are given practice on how to use them correctly, their knowledge and use of the target features can last a certain period of time. However, several factors should be taken into consideration when examining the results of the third test. First of all, a third of all students in the experimental group did not show up on the day of the third test because of bad weather. One cannot ignore the possibility that those who showed up are not representative of the whole class. Secondly, as Chinese students are constantly trained to take tests, the fact that the questions in

Test 1 were carefully explained to the experimental group but not to the control group might play a role in their performances in the third test. Further research along this line needs to be done to corroborate the present findings.

CONCLUSION

This study suggests that Chinese students at the college level benefit from direct instruction involving event/state pairs and the general phenomenon of lexical aspect. During direct instruction they seem to learn the general notion that aspect can be denoted lexically in English. They also learn that it is easier to understand this phenomenon by studying verbs in pairs, and that it is possible to memorize these pairs and in so doing improve on tests of grammar (multiple choice and fill in the blanks). In addition this study also suggests that with adequate study the effects of instruction do not diminish over time. It is hypothesized that students, when they are explicitly taught event/state pairs come away with a stronger, more native like understanding of English verbs and how many verbs are used in action sequences in English.

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Appendix 1: Transitional Event Verbs Vs. State Verbs of Having and Being

arrive	be here, be in	become fashionable	be in fashion
become involved in	be involved in	become interested in	be interested in
black out	be unconscious I	blossom	be in blossom
blow one's top	be angry	blow up	be destroyed
break	be broken	catch a cold	have a cold
clear up	be clear	come off	be off
come off duty	be off duty	come out	be in bloom
lose control	be out of control	take control	be in control
die/kill	be dead	disappear	be gone
discover	be known	dive	be under water
dive in/jump in	be in	drop/fall on the ground	be on the ground
fall in love	be in love	take off	be in the air
fail	be a failure	find out	know

finish	be done/be over	catch on fire	be on fire
make a fire	have a fire	put out a fire	fire be out
get drunk	be drunk	get dressed	be dressed
get hurt	be hurt	get in touch with	be in touch with
get lost	be lost	get into trouble	be in trouble
get ready	be ready	get married	be married
get off	be off	get on	be on
get rid of	be rid of	get separated	be separated
get stuck	be stuck	get upset	be upset
get used to	be used to	go blind	be blind
go on vacation	be on vacation	go on duty	be on duty
go on leave	be on leave	go on record	be on record
go on sale	be on sale	go on strike	be on strike
graduate	be out of school	have/give birth to a baby	have a baby
give a party	have a party	get an idea	have an idea
hurry	be in a hurry	get fired	be unemployed
get hired	have a job	lose/quit a job	be out of work
leave	be away	lose	be gone
lose contact	be out of contact	start off	be underway
lose touch with	be out of touch with	go crazy/lose mind	be out of mind
make a mess	be in a mess	become aware	be aware
meet	know	put on	be dressed
publish	be in print	put into danger	be in danger
put on hold	be on hold	put under pressure	be under pressure
run away	be gone	run out of	be out of
turn on	be on	turn off	be off
fall asleep	be asleep	wake up	be awake

Appendix 2

花開了 The flowers blossomed/came out. The flowers have blossomed/come out. 花開了好久了 It's been a long time since the flowers blossomed/came out. The flowers have been in blossom for a long time. (The flowers are still in blossom.) The flowers were in blossom for a long time. (The flowers are not in blossom.)	他們去年結婚/訂婚/離婚/分居 They got married/became engaged/got divorced/got separated last year. 他們結婚/訂婚/離婚/分居 兩年了 It's been two years since they got married/became engaged/got divorced/got separated. They've been married/been engaged/been divorced/been separated for 2 years.
我的車子壞了 My car broke down. My car has broken down. 我的車子壞了好幾天了 It's been days since my car broke down.	李先生過世了 Mr. Lee died. Mr. Lee has died. 李先生 過世好幾年了 It's been several years since Mr. Lee died.

My car has been broken for days.	Mr. Lee has been dead for several years.
你什麼時候畢業的 When did you graduate? 你畢業多久了 How long has it been since you graduated? How long have you been out of school?	他什麼時候回來的？ When did he return? 他回來多久了？ How long has he been back? How long has it been since he returned?
他離開了 He left. Hehas left. 他離開一陣子了 It's been some time since he left. He has been away for some time.	鄰居的小孩不見了 Our neighbor's kid disappeared. Our neighbor's kid has disappeared. 鄰居的小孩不見一個禮拜了 It's been a week since our neighbor's kid disappeared. Our neighbor's kid has been gone/missing for a week.
天晴了 It cleared up. The sun came out It has cleared up. The sun has come out. 天晴了一陣子 It has been a while since it cleared up/the sun came out. It has been clear for a while. The sun has been out for a while.	他愛上她了 He fell in love with her. He has fallen in love with her. 他愛上她有一段時間了 It's been some time since he fell in love with her. He has been in love with her for some time.
我起床了 I got up. 我起床好久了 It's been quite some time since I got up. I've been up for quite some time.	這規定下月起生效 The regulation will take effect next month. 這規定生效有幾個月了 It has been several months since the regulation took effect. The regulation has been in effect for several months.
我妹妹昏過去了 My sister blacked out/passed out. My sister has blacked out/passed out. 我妹妹昏過去好久了 It has been a long time since my sister blacked out/passed out. My sister has been unconscious for a long time.	他醉/病了 He got drunk/ sick. He has got drunk/sick. 他醉了/病了好幾個小時了 It's been hours since he got drunk/sick. He's been drunk/sick for hours.
我兒子感冒了 My son caught a cold. My son has caught a cold. 我兒子感冒好幾天了 It's been several days since my son caught a cold. My son has had a cold for several days.	他瘋了 He went crazy/lost his mind. He has gone crazy/lost his mind. 他瘋了好久了 It's been a long time since he went crazy/lost his mind. He's been out of his mind for a long time.
你們什麼時候認識的？ When did you meet/get to know each other?	他頭禿了 He became bald.

我們認識好久了 How long has it been since you met/got to know each other? We've known each other for a long time.	He's become bald. 他頭禿了好久了 It's been a long time since he became bald. He's been bald for a long time.

Appendix 3: Test 1

1. John knows how to count A. since he was two years old. B. when he was two years old. C. for two years. D. now.	8. The light A. has turned off for two days. B. turned off for two days. C. has been off for two days. D. was turned off since yesterday.
2. The rabbit disappeared A. since two years. B. one day ago. C. right now. D. for two days ago.	9. Tom A. has made a boat since yesterday. B. has had a boat two days ago. C. has made a boat now. D. made a boat last week.
3. Cindy is gone A. for five hours. B. since two hours ago. C. now. D. once.	10. Tom and Susan A. have married for two years. B. have been married for 2 years. C. got married for two years. D. have got married for two years.
4. For two days the man A. has been died. B. has died. C. has been dead. D. has dead.	11. The baby A. is asleep. B. fall asleep two hours ago. C. has fallen asleep 2 hours ago. D. is fall asleep since 2:00.
5. The dog A. has been gone for two days. B. has gone for two days. C. has been gone two days ago. D. was gone since two days ago.	12. Joan A. found a ring since yesterday. B. has found a ring since yesterday. C. has not found the ring. D. is found the ring.
6. John A. has become a doctor for 2 years. B. became a doctor two days ago. C. is a doctor since 1985. D. became a doctor since 1985.	13. Judy A. has jumped in the water for 10 minutes. B. jumped into the water since 2:00. C. has been in the water for one minute. D. has been jumped into the water for 10 minutes.
7. The dish A. has been broken for a long time. B. has broken since yesterday. C. is broken since yesterday. D. broke for two days	14. Kim A. has fallen in love for one year. B. has been in love for one year. C. is fall in love. D. fell in love since last week.

Appendix 4: Test 2

1. My friends A. have arrived for an hour B. have been here for an hour C. have arrived last week D. have been here since an hour	8. The fire A. has been on for 10 minutes. B. caught on for 10 minutes. C. put out for 10 minutes. D. was out since 10 minutes.
2. They A. have met for several years. B. knew each other since several years. C. met several years ago. D. have known each other now.	9. The flowers A. have blossomed in spring. B. are now in blossom. C. blossomed now. D. have blossomed for a week.
3. My teacher is gone A. for five hours. B. since two hours ago. C. now. D. once.	10. Michael and Jennifer A. are married for two years. B. have married for two years. C. have got married for two years. D. are married.
4. For two days my parents A. have lost touch with me. B. lose touch with me. C. have not been in touch with me. D. are not in touch with me.	11. My grandma A. was awake since this morning. B. wake up two hours ago. C. has waken up for a while. D. has been awake for a while.
5. The glass A. has broken since yesterday. B. has been broken yesterday. C. is broken now. D. broken yesterday.	12. Joan A. has graduated from school since last year. B. graduated from school for a year. C. has been out of school since last year. D. was out of school since last year.
6. John A. has become interested in history last year. B. became interested in history for a year. C. has been interested in history for a year. D. was interested in history since a year.	13. Judy A. has jumped in the water for 10 minutes. B. jumped into the water since 2:00. C. has been in the water for one minute. D. has been jumped into the water for 10 minutes.
7. The light A. has been turned on yesterday. B. was turned on for two days. C. has been on since yesterday. D. was on since yesterday.	14. They A. have fallen in love for one year. B. have been in love for one year. C. are fall in love. D. fell in love since last week.

Appendix 5: Introduction on the First Day

The author started class by drawing the students' attention to the differences between action and condition. She did this by turning off a light in class and asking the students what she did. Next, while the light was off, she asked them to describe the condition of the room (the lights are off). She also asked them what the connection was between the action and the condition. The answer that she was looking for was the second situation or condition was a direct RESULT of the action. Then she walked around the room for 30 seconds and asked the students what she had done. She also asked them if anything resulted from that action, if the action created a condition. The reason that she did this was to show the students that not all actions resulted in clear-cut conditions. (The point is that in English results are often expressed as conditions using a different verb than the verb that describes action.)

For a second example the author broke a chopstick into two, then asked the students to describe what she had done, what the condition of the chopstick was, and what the condition of the chopstick had been before she broke it. As an alternative, teachers can also bring food coloring to class and play with the colors. Add green to yellow and ask the students to tell you what happened (the water turned blue, or the water became blue). At this point the author felt the students should be ready to begin the picture activities.

Appendix 6: Details of Instruction to the Experimental Group

The author handed out the first picture exercise. Then she put students into groups of three and had them talk about the pictures. She specifically had them try to identify (but not yet write) the conditions and actions described by the pictures. She told them that these four pictures depict a sequence of events. She explained that this sequence of pictures describes something that happened in the past relative to the final picture. After about two-three minutes per picture, she

asked all the students to work on their own, writing the questions or statements for each picture sequence. In order to bring them to this understanding, she asked the students to tell her what happened at different times. She asked questions such questions as these: Where was the boy at 12:33? What was he doing? Where was the boy at 12:39? What was he doing? Where was the boy at 12:41? What was he doing?

Next, she had the students go through each of the remaining questions and answered them in their own groups. After the students finished answering all the questions in their groups, she elicited the answers from the entire class. She pointed out the last answer (to the question how long has....) stretches the condition of being out of the pool from the second he got out until the present moment. One function of the present perfect is to do just this stretch a condition out, from some point in the past, to the present moment. It is suggested that teachers do no more than 3-4 pictures per class. After the students had finished comparing their answers, she started to cover the correct answers with the class. She explained over and again that the condition begins as soon as the action ends. After the students had finished the statements and questions on their own, she put them back in their original groups and let them compare answers. Finally she opened the discussion to the whole class.

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